AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 through 51 canceled.

52. (Currently Amended) A funds transfer method in a system comprising a plurality of entity computers each with means to provide an unique entity identification (ID) and a system server computer interconnected by a communications network, the system server computer having an escrow account associated therewith into and out of which funds may be transferred, the method comprising establishing, prior to or during a funds transfer, an entity account for each entity computer with the system server computer and on a funds transfer being desired between two entity computers, designating, as appropriate, one as a remitter computer and the other as a receiver computer and then the steps are performed of:

the remitter computer sends transaction details and the receiver entity ID to the system server computer;

the systems server computer generates two different codes, namely, a locking code and a funds release code, in which the locking code is used to control the holding of the funds in the escrow account and the funds release code is used to control the release of the funds from the escrow account;

the systems server computer confirms, by sending the locking code and funds release code to the remitter

computer, the availability of funds in the escrow account for the receiver computer entity account; and the remitter computer sends the locking code to the receiver computer and the receiver computer sends the locking code to the systems server computer which locks the funds for that receiver computer so that the funds are no longer available to the remitter computer; and

~~on the system computer confirming the availability of the funds in the escrow account, the system computer sends the locking code to the remitter computer as confirmation of the availability of the funds in the escrow account for the receiver computer entity account and the funds release code to the remitter computer; and~~

in which on a specified event occurring, the funds release code is sent to the system server computer and the system server computer releases the funds from the escrow account to the receiver computer entity account.

53. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 52, in which on the system server computer confirming the availability of the funds in the escrow account, the system server computer sends the two codes to the remitter computer and if the remitter computer does not send the locking code to the other entity but sends it to the systems server computer, the

transaction is cancelled and the funds in the escrow account are released to the remitter entity account.

54. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 52, in which the sending of the funds release code to the system server computer comprises:

the remitter computer sending the funds release code to the receiver computer; and

the receiver computer sending the funds release code to the system server computer.

55. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 52, in which the specified event comprises one or more of:

the expiry of an agreed settlement date;

the receipt by the receiver computer of acceptance of completion of the transaction;

a prior agreed condition precedent for completion of the transaction being achieved;

a mutually agreed outcome notified by the two entities to the systems server computer; and

a decision by an arbitrator appointed to resolve the dispute.

56. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 52, in which the establishment of an entity account for a remitter computer is accomplished as part of the transfer of funds to the escrow account.

57. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 52, in which during the transaction, the remitter computer disputes the satisfactory completion of the transaction prior to an expected settlement date, the steps are performed of:

the remitter computer sends a revised settlement date to the system server computer;

the two entity computers enter into dispute resolution negotiations; and

if, on expiry of the revised settlement date, a satisfactory resolution of the negotiations has not taken place with the release of the funds in the escrow account to one or both of the entity accounts:

the systems server computer establishes an appropriate formal alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedure.

58. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 57, in which on the revised settlement date expiring, a new revised settlement date is set to allow negotiations to continue.

59. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 57, in which after a preset number of revised settlement dates have expired, the ADR procedure is initiated unless both entity computers agree to the setting of a further revised settlement date.

60. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 57, in which the system server computer records:

the number of transactions for each entity computer, acting as a receiver computer;

the reception of a revised settlement date for each transaction for that receiver computer as a default transaction; and

where the number of default transactions exceed a preset limit, the system server computer removes the entity computer from the system.

61. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 57, in which the system server computer records:

the number of transactions for each entity computer, acting as a remitter computer;

the reception of a revised settlement date for each transaction for that remitter computer as a default transaction; and

where the number of default transactions exceed a preset limit, the system server computer removes the entity computer from the system.

62. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 57, in which the sending of the funds release code by the remitter computer to the systems server computer permits the remitter computer to revise the settlement date.

63. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 60, in which the preset limit is one or more of:

a number of default transactions in a specified period;

a percentage of the total number of the transactions within a specified period being default transactions.

64. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 52 wherein each independent step is adapted to be sequentially carried out between two or more jurisdictions.

65. (Previously Presented) A funds transfer method in a system comprising a plurality of entity computers each with means to provide an unique entity identification (ID) and a system server computer interconnected by a communications network, the system server computer having an escrow account associated

therewith into and out of which funds may be transferred, the method comprising establishing, prior to or during a funds transfer, an entity account for each entity computer with the system server computer and on a funds transfer being desired between two entity computers, designating, as appropriate, one as a remitter computer and the other as a receiver computer in which the systems server computer and/or the receiver computer are outside the jurisdiction, and then the steps are performed of:

the remitter computer sends transaction details and the receiver entity ID to the system server computer;

generating two different codes, namely, a locking code and a funds release code, in which the locking code is used to control the holding of the funds in the escrow account and the funds release code is used to control the release of the funds from the escrow account;

from the systems server computer, the remitter computer receives confirmation that the receiver computer has been notified of the availability of funds in the escrow account for the receiver computer entity account, which funds are no longer available to the remitter computer;

in which on the system server computer confirming the availability of the funds in the escrow account, the remitter computer receives a funds release code from the

system server computer and confirmation that a locking code was sent to the receiver computer; and

then on a specified event occurring, the funds release code is sent to the system server computer instructing the system server computer to release the funds from the escrow account to the receiver computer entity account.

66. (Previously Presented) A funds transfer method in a system comprising a plurality of entity computers each with means to provide an unique entity identification (ID) and a system server computer interconnected by a communications network, the system server computer having an escrow account associated therewith into and out of which funds may be transferred, the method comprising establishing, prior to or during a funds transfer, an entity account for each entity computer with the system server computer and on a funds transfer being desired between two entity computers, designating, as appropriate, one as a remitter computer and the other as a receiver computer when one or both of the entity computers may be outside the jurisdiction and then the steps are performed of:

from the remitter computer, the systems server computer receives transaction details and the receiver entity ID;

generating two different codes, namely, a locking code and a funds release code, in which the locking code is used to

control the holding of the funds in the escrow account and the funds release code is used to control the release of the funds from the escrow account;

the systems server computer confirms the availability of funds in the escrow account for the receiver computer entity account, which funds are no longer available to the remitter computer;

in which on the system server computer confirming the availability of the funds in the escrow account, the system server computer sends the locking code to the receiver computer and the funds release code to the remitter computer, and

on a specified event occurring, the funds release code is received by the system server computer and the system server computer releases the funds from the escrow account to the receiver computer entity account.

67. (Currently Amended) A funds transfer method in a system comprising a plurality of entity computers each with means to provide an unique entity identification (ID) and a system server computer interconnected by a communications network, the system server computer having an escrow account associated therewith into and out of which funds may be transferred, the method comprising establishing, prior to or during a funds

transfer, an entity account for each entity computer with the system server computer and on a funds transfer being desired between two entity computers, designating, as appropriate, one as a remitter computer and the other as a receiver computer in which the systems server computer and/or the receiver computer are outside the jurisdiction, and then the steps are performed of:

the remitter computer sends transaction details and the receiver entity ID to the system server computer;

generating two different codes, namely, a locking code and a funds release code, in which the locking code is used to control the holding of the funds in the escrow account and the funds release code is used to control the release of the funds from the escrow account;

from the systems server computer, the remitter computer receives confirmation that the receiver computer has been notified of the availability of funds in the escrow account for the receiver computer entity account, which funds are no longer available to the remitter computer;

in which on the system server computer confirming the availability of the funds in the escrow account, the remitter computer receives a funds release code from the system server computer and confirmation that ~~a~~ the locking code was sent to the receiver computer and on a specified

event occurring, the funds release code is sent to the system server computer instructing the system server computer to release the funds from the escrow account to the receiver computer entity account;

in which during the transaction, the remitter computer disputes the satisfactory completion of the transaction prior to an expected settlement date, the steps are performed of:

the remitter computer sends a revised settlement date to the system server computer;

the two entity computers enter into dispute resolution negotiations; and

if, on expiry of the revised settlement date, a satisfactory resolution of the negotiations has not taken place with the release of the funds in the escrow account to one or both of the entity accounts:

the systems server computer establishes an appropriate formal alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedure.

68. (Previously Presented) A computer program comprising program instructions for causing a computer to carry out some or all of the method of claim 52.

69. (Previously Presented) A computer program according to claim 68, embodied on a record medium.

70. (Previously Presented)A computer program according to claim 68, stored in a computer memory.

71. (Previously Presented) A computer program according to claim 68, embodied in a read-only memory.

72. (Previously Presented) A computer program according to claim 68, carried on an electrical signal carrier.

73. (Previously Presented) A computer programmed to carry out some or all of the method of claim 52.